<u>REMARKS</u>

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated March 28, 2005. Claims 1 to 28 are pending in the application, of which Claims 1, 7, 11, 17 and 23 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

The drawings were objected to because they include reference characters not mentioned in the description. The specification has been amended herein to mention reference characters 63 to 65, shown in Fig. 6, and reference characters 93 to 96, shown in Fig. 9. Accordingly, drawing corrections are not necessary, and withdrawal of the objection to the drawings is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 4, 7, 8, 11 to 14, 17 to 20 and 23 to 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,933,676 (Ohno) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,920,405 (McIntyre). Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Turning to specific claim language, amended independent Claim 1 is directed to a controller which can communicate with a plurality of image forming apparatuses and transmit to one of the plurality of image forming apparatuses data for performing calibration of to the image forming apparatus. The controller includes a memory unit adapted to store information showing that the calibration of one of the plurality of image forming apparatuses is being executed, and a job managing unit adapted to assign a job assigned to the one of the plurality of image forming apparatuses whose calibration is being executed to another of the plurality of image forming apparatuses.

Claim 1 as amended now recites a controller which can communicate with a plurality of image forming apparatuses (printers, copiers) and transmit to one of the image

forming apparatuses data for performing calibration of the apparatus. A memory unit is provided to store information showing that the calibration of one of the image forming apparatuses is being executed. Additionally, a job managing unit is provided to assign a job which has been assigned to the image forming apparatus whose calibration is being executed to another of the image forming apparatuses. Accordingly, the controller may identify which one of a plurality of image forming apparatus is in the process of calibration and assign a job which is assigned to the identified image forming apparatus to another image forming apparatus.

In contrast, Ohno discloses a printer that can execute a calibration process based on calibration data received from an external device. When the printer of Ohno detects a status change (e.g., temperature change), the printer sets a calibration flag and sends a request for calibration to the external device. Then the printer receives the calibration data from the external device and executes the calibration process based on the received calibration data. When it receives the request for calibration from the printer, the external device generates the calibration data from status information indicative of the status of the printer and sends the calibration data to the printer.

Furthermore, McIntyre discloses a printer that receives no print jobs in an off-line state. In McIntyre, the printer is placed in the off-line state mainly to allow the printer to execute a calibration process.

The controller of the claim 1 invention can communicate with a plurality of image forming apparatuses, whereas the printer disclosed in Ohno or McIntyre cannot. The printer of Ohno or McIntyre, accordingly, cannot assign a job to another image forming apparatus while the printer is undergoing a calibration process. At best, a printer as

disclosed by Ohno and modified according to the disclosures of McIntyre is capable of calibrating itself while off-line.

In addition, the external device disclosed by Ohno cannot serve as the controller of Claim 1. In Ohno, the external device generates the calibration data and sends it to the printer in response to a request from the printer. The external device, however, does not include a memory unit adapted to store information showing that the calibration of the printer, which is one of the plurality of image forming apparatuses, is being executed, and a job managing unit adapted to assign a job assigned to the printer to another of the plurality of image forming apparatuses.

As Ohno and McIntyre, neither alone nor in combination, neither disclose nor suggest at least the features of a memory unit adapted to store information showing that the calibration of one of the plurality of image forming apparatuses is being executed and a job managing unit adapted to assign a job assigned to the one of the plurality of image forming apparatuses whose calibration is being executed to another of the plurality of image forming apparatuses, Applicant submits that amended Claim 1 is now in condition for allowance and respectfully requests same.

Amended Claim 7 is directed to an image forming system including the controller and the plurality of image forming apparatuses as recited in Claim 1. Claim 11 is directed to a method corresponding to the controller of Claim 1. Claims 17 and 23 recite a computer program and a storage medium storing the program, respectively, corresponding to the method of Claim 11. Accordingly, Applicant submits that amended Claims 7, 11, 17 and 23 are now in condition for allowance and respectfully requests same.
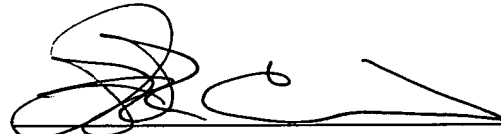
The other pending claims in this application are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed allowable for at least the

same reasons. However, as each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, individual consideration of each dependent claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

Based on the foregoing amendment and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, CA office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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